

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. to 19. (Canceled)

20. (Previously Presented) A nucleic acid encoding a polypeptide that

(a) comprises a first amino acid sequence at least 70 contiguous amino acids in length that is identical to a region of a wild type HBV core protein;

(b) lacks a second amino acid sequence of the wild type HBV core protein, wherein the second sequence comprises the carboxyterminal three amino acids of the wild type HBV core protein and does not exceed nine amino acids in length; and

(c) reduces hepadnavirus replication,

wherein the nucleic acid is operably linked to a promoter selected from the group consisting of hepatocyte-specific, cytomegalovirus, herpes simplex virus, hepatitis virus, Rous sarcoma virus and Simian Virus 40 promoters and wherein the carboxyterminal amino acid of the first amino acid sequence corresponds to position 175 or 178 of SEQ ID NO: 12.

21. to 37. (Canceled)